

SODC ward councillors' report

Shiplake – 8th July 2025

IT and Planning Applications

Some months ago, SODC carried out a major piece of planned essential maintenance and migration on its IT system. Unfortunately there were challenges which blocked the availability of online services – notably for planning applications. Although the majority of services returned to normal in July, by then a backlog had built up. Some services such as pre-application advice have been suspended to help recovery. Presently SODC planning is still some 2 weeks behind the standard time for processing planning applications. However this is being caught up and suspended services will be phased for re-introduction as this happens.

SODC's IT arrangements with a contractor - Capita – being moved and its systems are now running from managed data centres on Cloud systems – notably MS Azure. The current planning system, which is to be replaced later in the year was not designed for Cloud computing and there were initially some glitches which have been fixed. Please accept apologies for the disruption and thank you for your patience.

Local Government Reorganisation

To avoid duplication, please see County report.

Electoral Register

E-mails are being sent to all residents who previously provided e-mail contacts. The e-mails are headed "South & Vale Councils – Annual Electoral Register Check". The e-mail will come from elections@southandvale.gov.uk and will request confirmation of voter registration and contact details – thus saving on printing and postage costs.

Councillor Community Grants

This grant scheme has now opened for this year.

Each councillor will get a fund of £7,500, for projects within their ward. This is an increase of 50% on the past.

Since Sonning Common is a 2-member ward the funds will total £15,000.

Please contact us to discuss projects and there is more info at :-
<https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/south-oxfordshire-district-council/community-support/grants/councillor-community-grants/>

The closing deadline is **noon** on Friday 5th December 2025.

Mike Giles & Leigh Rawlins

District Councillors